

ADL's Recent Comprehensive Work on UCLA's Campus

ADL Presents to UCLA's Undergraduate Student Government

April 23, 2015



On April 21, ADL Pacific Southwest Regional Director Amanda Susskind, Associate Regional Director Ariella Schusterman and Assistant Regional Director Sarah Matos presented to the members of UCLA's Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC) on anti-Semitism, criticism of Israel, the points of intersections and the nuances and

complexities of these topics. ADL was invited by Hillel at UCLA as the only off-campus organization to present directly to USAC as part of the response to the [February 2015 anti-Semitic questioning of Rachel Beyda](#), who is now a current member of UCLA's Judicial Board. The presentation was also done as an important component of USAC's resolution condemning anti-Semitism, which passed unanimously shortly after the incident. The resolution was co-sponsored by the four students who took part in the problematic questioning.

After a graphic presentation on the history of anti-Semitism and the ways criticism of Israel can foster anti-Semitism, Susskind spoke to the responsibilities student leaders have to be mindful of the impact of their actions. She urged them to use their leadership position to stand up for all members of the student body – even those with whom they may disagree. “That is how you create an inclusive campus environment. That is how you represent the entire campus community.” Students lingered after the presentation to ask questions and express appreciation.



ADL's Recent Comprehensive Work on UCLA's Campus

ADL letter to New York Times about Anti-Semitism at UCLA

March 12, 2015

A version of this [letter](#) appears in print on March 12, 2015 in *The New York Times*.

March 11, 2015

Letters to the Editor
The New York Times

To the Editor:

The alarming story of anti-Semitism against a student at U.C.L.A. deserves the attention you gave it. It was indeed reminiscent of the kind of exclusion of Jews that goes back decades.

What's so stark about this case, however, was how unusual it was. The shock of it was exactly because we thought that this kind of prejudice was long gone in America. And so while it deserved the strongest condemnation, it also needs to be said that it was uncharacteristic of campus life for Jews in this country. It was also uncharacteristic of campus life for Jews at U.C.L.A., and was rightly condemned by students and the administration alike.

Life for Jews on campuses in America has challenges, most regarding anti-Israel activity. Activities like Israel Apartheid Week and boycott, divestment and sanctions resolutions are making Jewish students on some campuses more uncomfortable than in some time. These activities must be countered by information, education and leadership by university officials.

Still, for most Jewish students on campus, life is normal. This needs to be said, because mounting hysteria from some quarters on the subject of anti-Semitism on campus is simply not helpful to Jewish students and their families.

Sincerely,

Amanda Susskind
Director, Pacific Southwest Region

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Outrageous Questioning of UCLA Judicial Board Candidate Highlights Anti-Semitic Bias on Campus

March 11, 2015

UPDATES

UCLA's Undergraduate Student Association Council passed a resolution on March 10 condemning anti-Semitism and calling on the student government to take actions to ensure that Jewish students are not subjected to discrimination. [ADL applauded their efforts](#) and encouraged the students to move forward on implementing diversity training and other action items mentioned in the resolution. On March 11, [ADL's letter to the editor](#) was printed in response to the New York Times article from March 6. And on the same date, UC President Janet Napolitano issued a powerful [statement](#) condemning the anti-Semitic activity that has taken place on a number of UC campuses recently, including UCLA, and stated unequivocally that neither anti-Semitism nor any type of bigotry will be tolerated within the UC communities. ADL sent a [letter to UC President Janet Napolitano](#) on March 20 praising her "swift and powerful statements" rejecting recent instances of anti-Semitism on UC campuses.

On February 25, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block joined the chorus of voices denouncing the incident in an [open letter](#) stating "Religious affiliations and ethnic identity should not and do not disqualify someone from being an effective judge." ADL responded with a [letter thanking the chancellor for his leadership](#).

February 23, 2015

According to reports, at a UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC) meeting on February 10, council members questioned UCLA Judicial Board candidate Rachel Beyda's qualifications for the position and specifically her ability to represent students' interests impartially in light of her Jewish identity and affiliation with the Jewish community. While council members ultimately unanimously approved her appointment, this line of questioning highlights the existence of anti-Semitism and bias on college campuses.

The condemnation by the larger UCLA community was swift. In an [editorial](#), the Daily Bruin criticized the line of questioning right from its opening statement: "Religious affiliations and ethnic identity should not and do not disqualify someone from being an effective judge."

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Janina Montero followed the editorial with [a letter to the Daily Bruin](#) applauding the editorial "that took to task the questioning of the qualifications of a candidate for the Undergraduate Students Association Council Judicial Board specifically based on her Jewish religious and personal identity."

An [op-ed followed in the Daily Bruin](#) where Rachel Beyda's roommate, Rachel Frenklak, described what happened at the meeting and called it "undeniable anti-Semitism."

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Ten days following the meeting, four USAC members who participated in the discussion issued an [open apology to the Jewish community in the Daily Bruin](#). In the statement, the students indicated: "Our intentions were never to attack, insult or delegitimize the identity of an individual or people. It is our responsibility as elected officials to maintain a position of fairness, exercise justness, and represent the Bruin community to the best of our abilities, and we are truly sorry for any words used during this meeting that suggested otherwise."

This incident did not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it follows on the heels of the introduction of a number of anti-Israel divestment resolutions into student governments throughout the UC system ([including at UCLA where such a resolution passed last November](#)) and on campuses around the country. Most recently, the statewide panel that represents student governments across the University of California voted this month to urge that UC end any investments in companies that aid in the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

When a resolution to divest from companies doing business in the West Bank failed last spring at UCLA, [a vicious campaign to discredit two of the student council members who voted against it ensued](#). Students for Justice in Palestine ("SJP") initiated efforts to nullify the two students' votes because of their participation on trips to Israel sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Committee. In a petition to the judicial board, SJP asserted that these students committed an ethical violation merely by voting on the Divestment resolution after having taken part in the trips to Israel. Eventually, the Judicial Board of the UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council ruled that there was no conflict of interest.

In this situation, just being Jewish was enough to raise questions about a conflict of interest. While each of these disturbing incidents did yield just outcomes, their occasion highlights the continued need for education and training for all stakeholders in campus communities throughout our state.

ADL offers many resources for college campuses. A dedicated [Campus Affairs](#) website includes information on [Words to Action](#), an interactive education program expressly tailored to empower college students to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on campus. ADL's [Responding to Bigotry and Intergroup Strife on Campus](#) is a resource that provides information and guidance to university administrators about anti-Semitism and issues facing Jewish students. ADL also does trainings for campus law enforcement to help them learn how to respond to situations that threaten the security of the campus community.



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ADL Letter to UC President Janet Napolitano

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- President*
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March 20, 2015

President Janet Napolitano
 University of California
 Office of the President
 1111 Franklin Street
 Oakland, CA 94607

Via Email: president@ucop.edu

Dear President Napolitano:

On behalf of the Anti-Defamation League, I want to express our gratitude to you for your swift and powerful statements rejecting the recent instances of anti-Semitism at University of California campuses. Your speaking out to emphasize that there is no place for hate and bigotry in the UC Community and encouraging others to do the same is imperative to "preserving and strengthening the University of California's bedrock values of respect, inclusion and civility" as you so eloquently stated.

We value our relationship and remain at the ready to serve as a partner and resource.

Sincerely,

Abraham H. Foxman
 National Director

AHF:dj

Imagine a World Without Hate™

Anti-Defamation League, 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158-3560, T 212.885.7700 F 212.867.0779 www.adl.org

ADL's Recent Comprehensive Work on UCLA's Campus

ADL Applauds UCLA Students for Resolution Condemning Anti-Semitism

March 11, 2015

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) welcomed a resolution unanimously approved last night by the UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council condemning anti-Semitism and calling on the student government to take actions to ensure that Jewish students are not subjected to discrimination.

The resolution comes in response to a series of [troubling anti-Semitic incidents](#) that have taken place on University of California campuses across the state. In one such incident last month, a student leader had her qualifications for a Judicial Board position come under question due to her Jewish identity and affiliation with the Jewish community on campus. In another episode, swastikas were scrawled on a campus building.

“We are pleased that the undergraduate students association introduced and voted unanimously in favor of this resolution, and that the four students initially involved in questioning the Jewish student’s ability to serve were among the resolution’s co-sponsors,” said Amanda Susskind, ADL Pacific Southwest Regional Director. “No student should ever be singled out because of their religion. That is bigotry, plain and simple, and it has no place on the college campus. The resolution recognizes this, and makes an effort to repair the damage from their earlier actions.”

Ms. Susskind added, “This vote follows on the heels of a series of positive steps on the UCLA campus, including the apologies of the students involved in the questioning for the Judicial Board position and condemnation of their actions by the administration.”

ADL Letter to UCLA Chancellor Gene Block

February 26, 2015

Dear Chancellor Block:

Thank you for weighing in publicly in the incident involving Rachel Beyda’s application to be a member of the USAC Judicial Board. Your statement that “no student should feel threatened that they would be unable to participate in a university activity because of their religion” comports with the mission of the Anti-Defamation League. ADL has been following this matter closely and, like you, we were outraged that Ms. Beyda’s qualifications — and specifically her ability to represent students’ interests impartially — were challenged on the basis of her Jewish identity and affiliation with the Jewish community.

We were pleased to see the *Daily Bruin* opine “Religious affiliations and ethnic identity should not and do not disqualify someone from being an effective judge” and gratified that your Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Janina Montero weighed in to applaud the editorial “that took to task the questioning of the qualifications of a candidate for the

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Undergraduate Students Association Council Judicial Board specifically based on her Jewish religious and personal identity.” And, like you, we were pleased to see that four Undergraduate Students Association Council members who participated in the discussion issued an open apology to the Jewish community in the *Daily Bruin*.

However, we remain concerned; this incident did not occur in a vacuum. As your statement mentions, there have been a number of “incidents of bias on campuses across our nation.” ADL is dedicated to eradicating anti-Semitism and bigotry of all kinds. We have been particularly concerned with the number of ill-founded anti-Israel divestment resolutions introduced by student governments throughout the UC system (**including at UCLA where such a resolution passed last November**). You surely recall that last year, after a failed attempt to pass such a resolution at UCLA, two students alleged to have voted against the resolution became the victims of a vicious smear campaign.

You got it right when you stated “speech that stigmatizes or tries to intimidate individuals or targeted groups — even if it is constitutionally protected — does not promote the responsible debate essential for a healthy democracy. It is insufficient to reserve empathy only for those who look or act or think like we do.”

Your public denunciation of such incidents speaks volumes and leads by example. Thank you.

Warmly,

Amanda F. Suskind

Regional Director

Jewish Students Display Strategy and Strength in Face of BDS Movement on Campus

November 20, 2014

On November 18, the UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC) voted to pass an anti-Israel divestment resolution introduced by [Students for Justice in Palestine](#). Jewish and pro-Israel students displayed a unified front, delivering a petition signed by thousands of students with the singular message that they strongly object to the “invalid and ineffective use of student government” and that “USAC is not the forum for unrepresentative special interest groups to push their perspectives on international issues.”

The UC Regents (which has [previously condemned](#) anti-Israel divestment initiatives) and other university officials have made clear that this non-binding resolution will progress no further within the UC governing system. This was reiterated by UCLA Chancellor Block after the most recent divestment vote when he said, in part “*UCLA and the UCLA Foundation share the Board of Regents conviction that divestment decisions should not hold any one organization or country to a different standard than any other.*”

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The Board of Regents does not support divestment in companies that engage in business with Israel and UCLA agrees with that position.” Read the full text [here](#).

To view more about the Jewish and pro-Israel students' strategy to fight against the anti-Israel movement on the UCLA campus, see:

The Unified Community Press Release: *“Jewish life will continue to remain strong at UCLA irrespective of the results of tonight’s misguided initiative. We will continue to focus on building rather than destroying, hoping that one day we will be able to reach across the aisle like activists have done throughout history to elevate all of our campus communities.” Read the full text [here](#).*

The Unified Community Speech to USAC: *“This isn’t a human rights resolution, it’s a PR tool that serves to target a single community...Voting “No” on this resolution doesn’t mean you support human rights violations or that you are satisfied with the status quo. Voting “No” means that you believe there’s a possibility for a better, more effective way to facilitate a conversation between two emotionally-invested communities. If you vote “Yes” on this resolution, you’ve squandered an opportunity to pioneer change.” Read the full text [here](#).*

USAC President Avinoam Baral’s Speech at the Conclusion of the Divestment Hearing: *“Israel is what’s right about the Middle East.” Read the full text [here](#).*

An upcoming vote on another anti-Israel divestment resolution will take place on December 4 at a meeting of the UAW joint council local 2865, comprised of graduate student workers from the nine UC teaching campuses. Jewish and pro-Israel graduate students have been mobilizing against this resolution and have created a preemptive message that they have shared with local Jewish community organizations, fellow union members and the media. To see more about their efforts to counter this resolution, visit <http://informedgrads.org/>. You can also view the letter that ADL wrote to the President of the National UAW Dennis Williams recalling the union’s condemnation of anti-Israel boycotts and expressing concern with the resolution here.

ADL’s Role on College and University Campuses

ADL continues its work on campus empowering students, faculty, staff and administrators through information and education. We continue to do outreach to University Administrators, including contacting campuses nationwide prior to the start of the 2014-2015 school year to provide resources such as ADL’s [Responding to Bigotry and Intergroup Strife on Campus](#). This publication provides information and guidance to university administrators about anti-Semitism and issues facing Jewish students. ADL staff continue to meet with high-level campus administrators to talk about how Jewish students experience anti-Israel activity on campus. We consult about ways to make the college campus a true “marketplace of ideas” where differing views are treated respectfully and constructively. ADL is uniquely positioned to educate university officials about the Jewish and pro-Israel community’s perspective and encourage them to speak out against extreme anti-Israel activity and anti-Semitism.

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ADL consistently responds to non-binding student government resolutions urging divestment from Israel and companies that do business with Israel by the University of California. We expose and educate how the stated goals of the BDS movement demonstrate that the movement's objective is to isolate Israel and her supporters, and not create conditions for peace. ADL has worked closely with the students at UCLA to help fight against BDS and other anti-Israel tactics (see: [ADL Counters Anti-Israel Activities on UCLA Campus.](#))

ADL also works proactively to educate Jewish and pro-Israel students about responding to anti-Israel activity on their campuses. Through our interactive education program, [Words to Action: Empowering Jewish Students to Address Bias on Campus](#), we empower and equip college and pre-college students with constructive and effective responses to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on campus. To view a sample of the programs that have been done in ADL's Pacific Southwest Region, you can visit our [blog](#).

As anti-Israel campaigns continue to play out on college campuses across the country, ADL will stand with our partners in the local Jewish communities and with students to counter these initiatives and advocate on behalf of Israel and the Jewish people.

For more information on anti-Israel activity on campus see ADL's report: [Anti-Israel Activity on Campus After Operation Protective Edge.](#)

ADL Counters Anti-Israel Activities on UCLA Campus

May 16, 2014

UPDATE

On May 21st, the Judicial Board of the UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council ruled that there was no conflict of interest. ADL was pleased, though not surprised, by this result. Though the result was positive, ADL remains concerned about the damaging campaign that has been waged against Singh and ADL for the past several months.

May 16, 2014

The Anti-Defamation League continues to closely monitor recent activities on the UCLA campus, including the smear campaign against [ADL 2013 Campus Leaders Mission participant Sunny Singh](#). In February 2014, Singh, then a UCLA student council member, voted on a resolution to divest from companies doing business in the West Bank (the "Divestment resolution"). This resolution ultimately failed. A vicious campaign to discredit Singh and attack his motives ensued on-line and in person.

In April, the same day Singh announced his candidacy for student body president, and months after the failed Divestment Resolution, Students for Justice in Palestine ("SJP") initiated efforts to nullify Singh's vote and that of another council member, Lauren

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Rogers, who participated in a trip to Israel sponsored by American Jewish Committee's (AJC) Project Interchange. In a petition to the judicial board, SJP asserted that these students committed an ethical violation merely by voting on the Divestment resolution after having participated in the trips to Israel.

Those questioning Sunny's motives also suggested that his participation in the 2013 ADL Campus Leaders' mission tainted him as a candidate for student body president. Ironically, the candidate who narrowly won the election participated in a similar trip to Israel sponsored by AJC's Project Interchange just a year earlier. He was spared a smear campaign and ethics violations charges presumably because he remained pro-Divestment after participating in the trip.

ADL issued a [statement](#) on May 9, 2014, decrying these efforts as repugnant, misguided and based on one-sided anti-Israel bias.

The student council Judicial Board heard SJP's petition in a hearing on May 15, 2014. ADL Regional Director Amanda Susskind attended the hearing as one of Singh's witnesses. She described the ADL's Campus Leaders Mission as an educational opportunity where students are exposed to diverse points of view. "Our goal is to spark critical thinking, and arm students with first-hand knowledge of the complexity of issues," said Susskind. "The singular benefit is education."

Susskind testified that ADL organizes these trips to present many diverse perspectives about Israel and that ADL has no expectation or requirement that students take any particular position on any particular issue upon their return.

Following the hearing, Susskind said, "I think the Judicial Board heard loud and clear that ADL has no expectations of students who participate in the Campus Mission, other than to apply what they learned on the trip – whatever that may be. We hope the Board's decision will recognize the importance and value of expanding, rather than limiting, learning opportunities."

Part of ADL's work on campus involves ongoing outreach to college and system administrations. We routinely provide resources and are available when questions arise. To that end, we were pleased to see the statements from [UCLA Chancellor Block](#) and [UC President Napolitano](#) the day after the hearing.

ADL will continue to monitor the situation as it unfolds and respond when it is appropriate.

Read [ADL viewpoint in Jewish Journal](#).

In the News:

[Jewish Journal](#)
[Daily Bruin](#)
[Haaretz](#)
[Los Angeles Times](#)

ADL's Recent Comprehensive Work on UCLA's Campus

ADL Outraged at Suggestion that Sponsored Trips to Israel Create Conflicts of Interest for Student Leaders

May 9, 2014

The Anti-Defamation League is outraged by accusations by UCLA Students for Justice in Palestine that student leaders who took part on sponsored trips to Israel are somehow tainted and should not be able to vote on issues related to Israel.

ADL Pacific Southwest Regional Director Amanda Susskind issued the following statement:

These accusations are repugnant, misguided and appear to be based on one-sided anti-Israel bias.

The concept that students should refrain from participating in international educational experiences is antithetical to the spirit of academia and undermines the free exchange of ideas that are core to a university education. The suggestion that the trips somehow taint participants also assumes that they have no ability to judge for themselves about the experiences to which they have been exposed.

We understand that the UCLA judicial board will be hearing charges concerning this alleged conflict of interest. We are confident that any reasonable fact-finder will conclude that there was no "quid pro quo," and that participating in such trips in no way constitutes a conflict of interest as defined by the student bylaws.

We are also appalled by the "ethics statement" reportedly drafted and circulated by members of the Armenian Students' Association, Samahang Pilipino, the Afrikan Student Union, Students for Justice in Palestine, the Muslim Student Association and Jewish Voice for Peace in which they demand that candidates for student office pledge to refrain from taking free or sponsored trips with ADL, AIPAC or the Hasbara Fellowship. Singling out Jewish groups smacks of anti-Israel bias and interferes with students' cherished freedom of association.

This effort is just another strategy to delegitimize Israel and reflects how far the anti-Israel movement is willing to go in order to stifle voices that support the Jewish state. The tactic exposes the promoters' hypocrisy and intellectual dishonesty.

In the News:

[Jewish Journal](#)
[Daily Bruin](#)
[The Blaze](#)